COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. XIV. No. 17.] LONDON, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1808. [PRICE 10D

In the London Gazette Extraordinary, in which were published, by the government, the several documents relating to the late Convention in Portugal, the Armistice, which was the basis of all that followed, and which, as far as it was departed from, in the subsequent negociations, was rendered less injurious and disgraceful; this Armistice, which was, on our part, negociated by Sir Arthur Wellesley, and which bore his signature; this Armistice was published, was, by the government, communicated to the people of England, in the French language only, while all the other documents were, in the very same Gazette Extraordinary, published in the English language only.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

CONVENTION IN PORTUGAL. —— Sir Hew Dalrymple is arrived. He landed at Portsmouth on Tuesday last, the 18th instant; and, if I am rightly informed, his reception was not a bit more favourable than that which the citizens of London lately met with at St. James's. The reader knows, that Portsmouth abounds in government dependents of various sorts and sizes; yet, Sir Hew had to pass through hisses more loud and general than ever assailed the actors of a damned play. It is said, that so great was the indignation and so violent the apparent intentions of the populace, that it was thought necessary to surround the General with men, armed with pistols and swords. This was but a scurvy reception for a commander of an expedition; and, I must say, that I give the populace but little credit for it, seeing how *silent* they have been upon *former* occasions, when a similar feeling was called for. Sir Hew Dalrymple is looked upon as a man without powerful friends. Therefore it is that he is assailed. It is base to complain of him without, at the same time, complaining of those, whose example he has followed as closely as circumstances would permit. There is, it seems, to be a meeting in the County of Hants; but, no address, or petition, will have my vote, unless it point at *all* those, whose deeds have brought disgrace upon the arms of England.——Sir Arthur Wellesley came to Plymouth, and he had the discretion not to make any great noise upon his landing. He snugged it in, in the Plover sloop, and off he went, as fast as post-horses could take him, to that place where one man is not known from another; and where a man may walk about and be hidden at the same time. This must, however, have been a little mortifying to the high Wellesley. It was not thus that he used to enter Calcutta. He must, upon hurrying out of the wherry, at Plymouth, in order to bundle himself into the post-chaise, have looked back, with longing eyes, to the triumphal arches in India, and to the hundreds and thousands of gilded barges, that used to attend him and his high brother, in their excursions upon the rivers of "our "empire in the East." I dare say, that he began to wish himself back again in that country of "*glorious* wars;" in that country where we always come off victorious; in that country where we are great conquerors; in that country where there are *no Frenchmen* to fight against; in that country where there is no "licentious" press, and whence any man, be he who he may, is liable to be transported, at a moment's warning, if he dare to print or speak any thing displeasing to the Commander-in-Chief. If the late Convention, or one like it, had been made in that country, no man would have dared to utter even a whisper of disapprobation. In a country so situated as to its laws, it is very easy to be a great commander. The newspapers, and all the things printed in that country, are, before they are struck off, taken to a person appointed by the ruler, who strikes out with his pen all that he disapproves of, sometimes inserting other words in the stead, and, in short, leaves not one word, even in the *advertisements* of books, or of any thing else, that he thinks will be displeasing to the Governor General. Oh, what a fine thing it is to be a hero in that country! But, I think it may be as well for us not to expose ourselves to the contempt of the world by talking of the "*glo-*" "*ry*" which our armies acquire in India, especially now that we have seen one of these Indian heroes pitted against a general of France.—— Nobody has inquired, how Sir Arthur, how the "Chevalier du Bain," who beat "Monseigneur le Duc d'Abrantes "en personne;" how this gallant gentleman came to come home; how he came to quit the field of glory. Nobody has made this inquiry, and yet it is an inquiry very necessary to be made. We were told, that one great object of the Convention was, to "*gain time;*" to get our army, as soon as possible, into "the passes of the Pyrennees,"

there to meet the French and to stop them in their way to Spain. Has a man of our army yet moved in that direction, though it is now two whole months since the Convention was signed, and though it was not pretended, even by Sir Hew, that Junot could have held out more than two or three weeks? Has a man of our army moved in that direction? No; and this, at the time, in my very first article upon the subject, I said must and would be the case. I knew that we should not send away our army if we could. I knew, that we should not leave the Portuguese *people* to do any thing in the way of settling their affairs; and, besides, it was easy to forsee, that a sea-conveyance would be wanted for the troops, which conveyance we had made over to the French. There the army is, then, at the end of two months, just where it was the day after Wellesley's "glorious victory." What *time* has been gained, then? How has the Convention answered the purpose of hastening our army towards "the passes of the Pyrenees?" But, how came Wellesley to *come away*, when it was so necessary to push on to meet the French? "He is not *recalled*." O, no; he is upon "*leave of absence*." What! get leave of absence, at the very moment when the army was to be pushed on towards the passes of the Pyrennees! "The conqueror of Vimeira" get *leave of absence* at such a time! Leave to be absent from fighting! No: he will not like this ground. Well, then, will he say, that there was no prospect of the army's marching towards the passes of the Pyrennees, or moving towards any other point of real war? Will he say this? If he do, then we ask him what was meant by *gaining time*, in making the Convention, and what that same service was, which was in contemplation at the time when the Convention was made? Admitting, then, that he is come home simply upon *leave of absence*; that, the fact is as his partizans say; he stands in this dilemma: either he is come home for the purpose of avoiding another meeting with the Tartar Duke, or any of his like; or, the pretext of *gaining time* by the Convention was a false one.——The real truth, however, I take to be, that the ministers, or some of them, when they found that nothing could reconcile the country to the Convention, they, knowing (what the public did not at first know) that Wellesley had been the chief instrument in making the Convention, sent off, with all possible speed, an order to Sir Hew to give him a leave of absence. To keep him there they would not venture, and to *recall* him they did not like. The middle course was determined upon; and, it was, too, of great importance, that he should have an opportunity of telling *his* story first. This accords with all the rest of the proceedings. There has been, from the first, an evident intention to screen Wellesley, let what would come of the other parties concerned; and this intention becomes, every day, more and more certain.——As to our army in Portugal, so far from being disposed of in the way that was expected, and that it was pretended it would be, it is, it appears, taking possession of different towns and districts *in Portugal*; seating itself quietly down as in a country that it has *won*; while our generals are issuing proclamations for the *keeping of the people in order*. It is said, that we have *forty-seven* generals there. What a deal of wine they will drink! What a fine expence they will be to us! General Hope (of the "*ardent-minded*" family) has issued a proclamation that would not have disgraced the late Lord Advocate of Scotland himself. The fact is, that our whole army in Portugal is now employed in keeping *the people* of Portugal in order; that is to say, in preventing them from forming assemblies of representatives and choosing men to conduct their affairs, as the people of Spain have done. Who did not suppose, that, as soon as we should have beaten the French in Portugal, and relieved that country from the presence and the oppression of its invaders, we should have left the Portuguese to take care of their own affairs and marched off to the assistance of the Spaniards? Was not this what we all supposed? And was it not under the pretence that our army would be set loose to march into Spain; was not this the *sole* pretence under which a justification, or an excuse, was found for the Convention? Now, it appears, however, that our army has got into such snug quarters, that it has no desire to move. It has been moulded into a superintendant of the police; a sort of Gendarmerie, or of Holy-brotherhood, established in Portugal. Are we told, that the security of the *monarchy* of Portugal requires this; for that the people, if left to themselves, might fall to work to make a government of their own? Let us be told this *plainly*, then. Let us be told, if this really be the motive, that we are fighting and labouring merely for the support of the old royal families against the new royal families, and not at all for the freedom and happiness of any people in any part of the world. Let us be told this, in so many plain words, and then we shall know how to think and to feel.——The king's reception

of the city of London *Address and Petition* has excited a little discontent in the minds of many persons, even in this humbled country. But, before we proceeed to make any remarks upon this, let us insert the documents themselves. "To THE KING'S "MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY. The hum- "ble and dutiful Address and Petition of "the Lord Mayor, Alderman, and Com- "mons of the City of London, in common "council assembled.——MOST GRACIOUS "SOVEREIGN,——We your majesty's most "dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lord Mayor, "Alderman, and Commons of the city of "London, in common council assembled, "most humbly approach your majesty, "with renewed assurances of attachment to "your majesty's *most sacred* person and "government, and veneration for the free "principles of the British constitution; to "express to your majesty our grief and "astonishment, at the extraordinary and "disgraceful Convention lately entered into "by the commander of your majesty's "forces in Portugal, and the commander of "the French army in Lisbon.——The cir- "cumstances attending this afflicting event "cannot be contemplated by British minds "without the most painful emotions; and "all ranks of your majesty's subjects seem "to have felt the utmost concern and in- "dignation at a treaty so humiliating and "degrading to this country and its allies. "After a signal victory gained by the valour "and discipline of British troops, by which "the enemy appears to have been cut off "from all means of succour or escape, we "have the sad mortification of seeing the "laurels so nobly acquired torn from the "brows of our brave soldiers, and terms "granted to the enemy disgraceful to the "British name, and injurious to the best "interests of the British nation.——Be- "sides the restitution of the Russian fleet "upon a definitive treaty of peace with "that power, and the sending back to "their country, without exchange, so "large a number of Russian sailors, by this "ignominious Convention, British fleets "are to convey to France the French army "and its plunder, where they will be at "liberty immediately to recommence their "active operations against us or our allies. "The guarantee and safe conveyance of "their plunder, cannot but prove highly "irritating to the pillaged inhabitants over "whom they have tyrannized, and for "whose deliverance and protection the Bri- "tish army was sent, and the full recogni- "tion of the title and dignity of Emperor "of France, while all mention of the go- "vernment of Portugal is omitted, must "be considered as highly disrespectful to the "legitimate authority of that country.—— "We therefore humbly pray your majesty, "in justice to the outraged feelings of a "brave, injured, and indignant people, "whose blood and treasure have been thus "expended, as well as to retrieve the "wounded honour of the country, and to "remove from its character so foul a stain "in the eyes of Europe, that your majesty "will be graciously pleased immediately to "institute such an inquiry into this disho- "nourable and unprecedented transaction, "as will lead to the discovery and punish- "ment of those by whose misconduct and "incapacity the cause of the country and its "allies have been so shamefully sacrificed. "——We beg to assure your Majesty of "our unalterable fidelity, and earnest desire "to co-operate in every measure conducive "to the peace, honour, and security of your "Majesty's dominions.——Signed by order "of court,—HENRY WOODTHORPE."—— To which Address and Petition his Majesty was *graciously* pleased to return the follow- ing answer:——"I am fully sensible of "your loyalty and attachment to my person "and government.——I give credit to the "motives which have dictated your Petition "and Address, but *I must remind you that* "*it is inconsistent with the principles of* "*British justice to pronounce judgment with-* "*out previous investigation.*——I should "have hoped that recent occurrences would "have convinced you, that I am at all times "ready to institute inquiries on occasions in "which the character of the country, or "the honour of my arms is concerned, and "that the interposition of the City of Lon- "don could not be necessary for inducing "me to direct due inquiry to be made into "a transaction, which has disappointed the "hopes and expectations of the nation." ——They were, as the newspapers state, all *graciously* received, and had the honour TO KISS HIS MAJESTY'S HAND. What, *all?* All a kiss a-piece? Mr. Waith- man, who moved the Address, and who, in making the motion, talked about *Dunkirk* and the *Helder*; did he get a kiss too? I would give a trifle for the ascertaining of this fact. They *kneel*, I think I have heard, when they kiss. This must have been a highly diverting scene to Sir Arthur Wel- lesley, who was at court, and who, as ap- pears from the newspapers, was the first person presented to the king on that day, "upon his return from Portugal, on *leave* "*of absence.*" He must have enjoyed this scene. The thing was perfect in all its

parts. Nothing ever was more so. The Londoners "*most humbly approach*" with a "most humble and dutiful" expression of "assurances of attachment to his Majesty's "*most sacred* person *and government*;" but, then, immediately afterwards, they fall to expressing opinions relative to the Convention in Portugal, and to pray, that something or other may be done about it. Whereupon they get a good hearty slap; and then, being of the true breed, they all kneel down and fall to kissing the hand, by which it has been bestowed. Towards such people the king certainly acted with great propriety; for, if not only his person was the "most "sacred" person, but his government also the "most sacred" government; if this was the case, what presumption was it in these citizens to interfere in the exercise of the functions of either? And, if this was not the case, then the citizens told a barefaced lie, and, as having done that, were well worthy of the rebuke they received. They first say: you are the most sacred of human beings, and your government is as sacred as you; they appear to approach with fear and trembling not to be described by words; and then, all of a sudden, they begin to sport their opinions about the operations of the army and the conduct of the generals, seeming to forget that the army is under the absolute command of this "most "sacred" of persons, and that all the generals have been selected by this "most "sacred" of governments.——I am glad, however, that they kissed the king's hand after he had given them what they deserved; because it showed, that they were penitent; that they were come to their senses; that they had seen the folly, not to say the impiety, of presuming to dictate to beings the "most sacred" here below.—— The Morning Chronicle has taken part with the citizens, who, *after they got a great way off*, seem to have grumbled at the King's answer, notwithstanding they had kneeled down and kissed his hand. This print has quoted some instances of the conduct of the late King, upon similar occasions. The passage is as follows: "A very strong "Petition was presented by the Corporation of London to the King, in the year "1756, respecting the affair at Minorca, "praying for such an inquiry as may lead "to the discovery and punishment of the "authors of the late losses and disappointments," almost the same words of the "prayer of the Petition presented on Wednesday; the words of which are, "to "institute such an inquiry as will lead to "the discovery and punishment of those "by whose misconduct and incapacity th "cause of the country and its allies ha "been so shamefully sacrificed:" the an "swer to the Petition of 56 was as follows "——"I thank you for these profession "of your duty to me; *my concern fo* "*the loss of my island of Minorca i* "*great and sincere*; my utmost car "and vigilance have been, and shall b "exerted to maintain the honour of the "nation, and the commerce of my sub "jects. The events of war are uncer "tain, but nothing shall be wanting on "my part towards carrying it on with "vigour, in order to a safe and honour "able peace, and for recovering and "securing, by the blessing of God, the "possessions and rights of my crown. "—*I shall not fail to do justice upon* "*any persons who shall have been want* "*ing in their duty to me and their coun* "*try*; to enforce obedience and disci "pline in my fleets and armies, and to "support the authority and respect due "to my government."——In the year "1757, when the immortal Chatham was "at the head of affairs, after the failure of "the Rochford Expedition, a member of "the common council had given notice of "a motion for "an address and petition "to his majesty on the miscarriage of "the late expedition to the coast of "France."——The Lord Mayor acquaint "ed the court, that on Monday the 1st "day of October, 1757, William Blair, "Esq. one of the clerks of his majesty's "most honourable privy council, came "to the Mansion House and acquainted "the Lord Mayor, that he waited on his "Lordship to let him know, *his Majesty* "*had given proper directions for an in* "*quiry to be forthwith made into the be* "*haviour of the Commanding Officers in* "*the late expedition against France, and* "*the cause of the miscarriage of the said* "*expedition, and that such inquiry would* "*be carried on and prosecuted with the* "*utmost expedition, vigour and effect.*" "——Now, why it should be more incon "sistent with the principles of British jus "tice, to petition for an inquiry of this "kind in 1808, than in 1756 and 1757, it "is impossible to conceive, unless indeed "we should suppose, that lord Hawkesbury "is a much better judge of the principles "of British justice than lord Chatham. "The Address presented on Wednesday, "and that of 56, are the same in spirit, "and almost in terms. How then are we "to account for the difference of their re "ception? Why should the one be con-

sidered as perfectly just and proper, while the other is reproved as having "pronounced judgment previous to investigation?" We have not now, however, to learn with what a total disregard of delicacy and propriety the ministers can occasionally conduct themselves *towards their Sovereign*. When they have any favourite object to accomplish, they, without the least scruple, advise his majesty to contradict and stultify his own acts and expressions. Is this decent? Is it to be endured *either by the king or the nation?* Can it fail to remind us of the infamous administration of the prince of the Peace in Spain? The gracious reception met with by sir A. Wellesley, at the very moment the Corporation was admitted, leaves little doubt as to the design of this proceeding. But we trust that a British public will not tamely see *their Sovereign abused*, and themselves checked in the exercise of their constitutional privileges, without the strongest marks of indignation at such mischievous practices."——Now, as to these instances, to make them applicable, the Morning Chronicle should have shewn us, not that the form of the constitution of the country was the same that it was in the years 1756 and 1757, but that it was in substance the same, and, above all, that the *people* were still the same sort of people. At the former period the taxes raised upon the labour of the people amounted to about 5 or 6 millions a year, and they now amount to fifty millions; that is to say, the ministers of that day had five or six millions a year to expend, while the ministers, now-a-days, have, in loans and all, about seventy millions a year to expend. At the former period, the standing army did not amount, perhaps, to more than thirty or forty thousand men, in time of war; now, the *staff* and *foreign troops* exceed that number, while the whole of the commissioned-officers, *cashierable at pleasure*, amount to about fifteen thousand persons, and while, in one way or another, the relations of all these, as well as themselves, are, in some measure, dependent upon the ministry. At the former period a thing like the income tax had never entered the mind of man, and, if an Englishman of that day had been told, that his children would have such a tax imposed upon them, he would have clenched his fist and knocked down the asserter. At that period the East India Company were mere merchants and not sovereigns; not a body so powerful as to be able to draw from the people of England million after million of the fruit of their labour. At that period the doctrine that truth was a libel, and that to hurt a man's feelings was libellous, had not been promulgated and acted upon, much less was there any law for *transporting* persons convicted of libelling the ministers. At that time, the *Habeas Corpus*, or *Personal Security Act*, had never been suspended except in case of actual rebellion or commotion, much less had it been kept suspended for several years together. At that period there was no instance of a minister's having been detected in lending forty thousand pounds of the public money to two members of parliament, without interest, without any authority for so doing, and without the consent or knowledge of even his colleagues; and, upon proof of this being laid before the parliament, of such minister's being screened by a bill of indemnity.——Now, whether the change is for the better or for the worse; whether the people have acted wisely in lending their aid, or giving their silent assent, to this change, let the citizens of London decide; but, that the change has taken place is certain; that they have, tacitly at least, approved of the change, is also certain; for it is notorious, that they have, more than any other part of the people, supported the funding and taxing system, which has naturally produced all the rest of the change; and, therefore, they have no reason at all to complain that the present king does not speak to them in the language in which his predecessor spoke to their fathers. What! they now whine and snivel because they are not treated as their fathers were treated. Their fathers were a different sort of men; their fathers would have demanded inquiry upon *other* occasions than the present; their fathers knew, felt, and would have urged, their *rights*, at a time when they were talking of their *duties*; their fathers knew how to *demand* as well as to *implore*; their fathers were men widely different from them, and, therefore, they merited and received a treatment widely different. What! is it till now that they have waited to discover that they are not what their fathers were? Do they now complain of the Pitts and the Hawkesburies; they, who have supported them *in every thing* for so many long and fatal years of decline of national pride and independence! They, who have set up the howl of Jacobin and traitor against every one, who dared to move his tongue or his pen in opposition to the acts and designs of the minister of the day? They, who have voted and speechified and subscribed against every person, who talked of free

dom? They, who, whether in his making peace or in making war, approved of all, aye, all and every individual act, of the late Pitt? Do they now complain of the operation of his principles, acted upon by his legitimate heirs and successors? "In-"quiry"! What right have such men to ask for inquiry? They, who have, a hundred times voted against the principle of inquiry; they, who have been maintaining, for more than twenty years past, the doctrine of *confidence* and *irresponsibility*; they who have, upon all occasions, represented as disaffected to the *country* every man who has wished for inquiry into the conduct of the government? What right have such men to ask for inquiry *now* in particular; and with what face can they complain, that they are sharply rebuked for so doing? Pity them, indeed! Not I. They have their just reward. If they had not acted a base and degenerate part, for so many years, that which has now happened, that which has now at last urged them to ask for inquiry, never would have happened. It is "in themselves, and not in their stars, "that they are underlings." Their humiliation is the work of their own hands. To such men the king's answer was perfectly proper; and, as the rest of the nation has invariably followed their example in acts of submission and subserviency to the ministry of the day, the answer to them will very properly become a general one. The years 1756 and 1757, indeed! Remind the king of what was the language of the king at that time! As well might he remind them of what was the language and what the conduct of the people at that time, or in former times. When it has been urged to this same corporation of London, that such and such acts were a glaring violation of the constitution of England, has not the answer constantly been, that *the times were changed*; that the present situation of the country warranted, and demanded, that which, formerly would have been unjustifiable; and, have we not recently seen, from the pen of those who are well known to be the avowed advocates of the Opposition party, a justification of what was formerly called "bribery and corruption," a justification of the purchase and sale of seats in parliament, as being suitable to this new state of things? And, are we, after this; after having lived so long in this state, to be called upon to bestow our compassion upon those, who, having been most instrumental in producing it, now complain, that they are not treated as their fathers were? But, the chief objection to their complaint is this: why did they not petition for inquiry upon *former occasions*? Is this the *first* military failure that this poor nation has experienced? Is this the first disgraceful Convention that has been made? Is this the first instance, of late years, in which English treasure and English blood have been expended in the purchase of national dishonour? If it be, then these people might have some ground for complaint; but, if it be not, and if this be the first time of their petitioning for inquiry, the answer they have received, so far from being harsh, was much milder than they had a right to expect.—They complain of the omnipotence of "a "*certain great family*," dealing, as slaves must and do, in inuendo and insinuation, not daring to name those whom they hate. But, is not the "omnipotence" of this family their own work? Have they ever stirred an inch in the inquiries moved for with respect to the Wellesleys? Have they not set their faces against all those who did? Have not both parties; have not the nation, with here and there a solitary and insignificant exception, given their sanction to what has been the natural cause of what they now complain of? Whimpering, whining creatures, as they are, it is truly a pretty jest to hear *them*, at this day, calling for inquiry! No, no: they must not hope to succeed in this way. It is too late for them to assume a new character. Oh, the base flatterers! It stirs one's gall to hear their complaints. Is there a man or a woman or a child, in power, or belonging to any one in power, whom they have not eulogized to the skies? Have they not praised *all* that has been done, and all that has been intended to be done, by every set of men who, for the time being, had the expending of the taxes! Is not this the case? No man can deny that it is. Away with them and their complaints, then! Let them howl to the winds.—There is a part of the observations of the Morning Chronicle, relating to the King himself, which deserves notice. It blames the answer, but chooses to suppose, that the ministers *forced* the king to give such an answer, and expresses a hope, that "the "*British public* will not tamely see *their* "*Sovereign thus abused.*" I am at a loss to know, whether this be meant as irony, or not. If it be, it is much too grave; for certainly the far greater part of readers will take it as serious, and, if so, they must suppose, that the Morning Chronicle pays no great compliment to the intellects of the King. "The King can do no wrong;" but, the meaning of this is, not that he can wittingly and willingly do nothing which is

wrong in itself, because, being subject to passion like other men, he might knock a person down; but, that he can do nothing *which shall subject him to the operation of the criminal law.* In any other sense, the words are an absurdity. They would suppose the King to have neither will nor judgment of his own; to be a mere state puppet, whose situation might be filled by an ideot or a log of wood. To that sort of courtesy, which imputes to the ministers all that one disapproves of in the language and conduct of the King, there is no objection; but, to carry this so far as to call upon the people to *avenge* the King on account of what he, from his own lips, has uttered, is really an insult upon the understanding of the public, and would be practised by no one, whose views were not much more of a *party* than of a public nature.——BERKSHIRE has come to a resolution to follow the example of the City of London, and, as I fear the instances will be rare, after the rebuke which the city received, I shall, as far as I am able, perpetuate the memory of these instances. The following is an account of the proceedings in Berkshire:——"READ-"ING, Oct. 18.—Pursuant to a requisition "signed by a number of the freeholders of "our county, and an order issued in conse-"quence thereof by the high sheriff, a most "numerous and respectable meeting of the "nobility, clergy and freeholders, was this "day held in the town-hall, for the pur-"pose of taking into their consideration the "terms of the late Convention in Portugal, "which has been acceded to by the British "general officers commanding in that coun "try, and for expressing to his majesty "their sentiments on the occasion. After "the usual form of opening the court, it "was moved and seconded, "That an "humble and dutiful address be presented "to his majesty, praying that he may be "graciously pleased to order that an in-"quiry should be instituted with respect to "the cause of the late disgraceful Conven-"tion in Portugal, and also beseeching his "majesty that he may be graciously pleased "to order that such steps may be taken, as "will ensure the punishment of the guilty "person or persons in that disgraceful trans-"action, however high his rank in society "may be."——The motion was made by "G. MITFORD, Esq. and seconded by C. "DICKINSON, Esq. It was opposed by Mr. "NARES one of the *British Critic* parsons, "the other being the famous *Mr. Beloe*, "who was, sometime ago, *at the British "Museum.* Mr. Nares was seconded by a "Mr. COBHAM.—The opposition rested "not only on the idea that judgment would "by this motion be pronounced before trial, "but also on the principle of its being *im-"proper to offend the royal ear by a subject "presuming to give his advice in a manner "which was known to be contrary to the de-"clared sentiments of the royal mind.* In "reply to both these points, it was argued "by Lord FOLKESTONE, HENRY MARSH, "Esq. Dr. VALPY, and other gentlemen "who signed the requisition, that no indi-"vidual was implicated, either by the words "or tenor of the motion; it pointedly, no "doubt, censured the thing; but it, at the "same time, called for inquiry as to who "may be the guilty person, and expressing "the anxious hope of the freeholders, that "exemplary punishment may follow this "trial and conviction. With respect to the "second point which had been advanced "by some of the opposers of the motion, it "had been so repeatedly urged, and refuted "in the most able manner, that it was "thought hardly worth a comment; it was "a fact which was notorious to every Eng-"lishman who ever consulted a page of "his own history, that, however correct "the motives of the gentlemen who op-"posed the present motion might possibly "be, and most probably were, yet it was a "most unquestionable fact, that the "dan-"ger of offending the royal ear" has been "urged by the most abject slaves, and most "time-serving sycophants, in the worst pe-"riods of our history. On the other hand, "the fact was as clearly ascertained, and as "generally known, that at the periods of "our history which excited the universal "admiration of the world, the constitutional "language of Britons was held to be this—"that every subject, however humble his "station in life might be, had by the pe-"culiarly inestimable blessings of the Bri-"tish constitution, a most unquestionable "right, and that, in fact, it was his boun-"den duty, to approach the throne, on any "great public emergency, by which the "national character, interest, or honour, "may appear to him to have been compro-"mised, and state his sentiments thereon in "respectful but in manly terms; it was his "duty to do so, in order that the parental "attention of the sovereign might be more "immediately, but with humility, called to "a point in which bad advisers, had pre-"viously had access to the royal ear.—— "The motion was then put and carried by "a majority of *six to one.*"——The Corporation of WINCHESTER have addressed the King upon the subject! "Tread upon "a worm and it will turn again." This is

really creditable to Sir Henry Mildmay, who though in a very bad state of health, did, I believe, attend the meeting in person.—— The inhabitants at large, of the city and suburbs of Winchester, have also sent an Address, of which a copy is here inserted. I have heard, too, that the names, signed to this address, were, many of them, such as might have been expected to be withheld, upon such an occasion. Really, if *Winchester* acts thus, there may be something like *soul* yet left in this county. The account is as follows, and it is with unfeigned satisfaction that I put it upon record.——

"On Monday se'nnight the corporation of "Winchester held a meeting, at the Guild-"hall, for the purpose of considering the "propriety of addressing his majesty on the "convention lately entered into by the of-"ficers commanding his Majesty's forces "in Portugal, H. C. P. Mildmay, esq. the "mayor, in the chair. An address was "proposed by Mr. Alderman Earle, and "seconded by Mr. Alderman Silver, and "unanimously agreed to, *praying his Ma-"jesty to institute an inquiry into their con-"duct.* Sir R. Gamon, bart. and H. C. P. "Mildmay, esq. the representatives of this "city, were desired to present the same, "attended by Mr. Alderman Earle. And "on Thursday following, a meeting of the "inhabitants at large of the city and su-"burbs of Winchester was held at the same "place (by permission of the mayor) for "the like purpose; when Dr. Littlehales "was unanimously called to the chair, and "the following address was proposed by "W. F. Bury, esq. and seconded by J. "Woolls, esq. and unanimously agreed to: "——To THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT "MAJESTY.—*May it please your Majesty*, "We, your Majesty's most dutiful and "loyal subjects, inhabitants of the city and "suburbs of Winchester, beg leave to ap-"proach the throne to express our sincere "attachment to your royal person and fa-"mily, and being sensible that your Ma-"jesty's true glory is inseparable from that "of your people, we humbly presume to "pray that your Majesty will be pleased to "order a full, free, and effective inquiry "to be made into the causes and circum-"stances of the convention of Portugal – a "convention which has caused general mor-"tification and disappointment, and de-"prived your brave soldiers of the expected "result of their good and honourable exer-"tions—the unconditional surrender of the "whole French army. Your petitioners "cannot but deeply lament that such an "opportunity was lost; but as we do not "presume to anticipate conviction, if, up-"on mature investigation, is shall be found "that your commanders were compelled "by insurmountable obstacles to conclude "such a treaty, justice demands that they "should be reinstated in the good opinion "of their country; but, on the other hand, "if they were actuated by any thing less "than imperious necessity, we are fully "persuaded, from the interest which your "majesty must ever feel in the fair fame "and honour of your kingdom, that they "will experience such marks of your royal "displeasure as may prove a severe example "to others, and deter them from tarnishing "in the cabinet, the glory acquired in the "Field."——This Address is very good indeed. There is none of that spaniel-like humility in it that we see in the London Address. The people do not seem to speak as if they were approaching the throne of a life-and-death sovereign. Upon reading the London Address, one cannot help figuring to one's self a parcel of crouching creatures with knees knocking together and teeth clattering in their head, as if waiting the crash of a roof or the fall of a thunderbolt. No man living would suppose, that they were the descendants of the men, who obtained the *Bill of Rights* and the *Act of Settlement*. I hear that the *county* is to have a meeting; but, whether the answer to the city will put a stop to this, is more than I shall pretend to determine.——ESSEX is about to meet, and I am happy to perceive, that Mr. BURGOYNE is taking an active part; for, if I am to judge from what he has written and *published*, he is as sensible and sound a man as any in the kingdom, though, as to some particular points, I differ from him in opinion. That county has been, as to representation in parliament, a *nullity*, for many years. The two factions, as they did in Westminster, have, to save trouble and expence, made an amicable arrangement, by which they name each a member, the chief persons in the county have a good dinner, once in six years, toast the British Constitution, and *the people* have just as much to say in the matter, as the good people of Russia or Turkey or Germany have in choosing their representatives.—— Aye, *here* is the source; *here* is the real cause of all our failures abroad and of all our misery at home. There should be no Address, or Petition, upon this occasion, uncoupled with a declaration as to this fertile cause of mischief. It is idle to talk about reformation any where else, till a reformation take place here.——As somewhat connected with this subject of the Convention,

I cannot refrain from noticing a dispute that is going on about which part of the kingdom has the misfortune *to have given birth to Sir Hew Dalrymple.* The *Irish* must own to the Wellesleys; we here in *England*, and even in Hampshire, I believe, to Sir Burrard; and, from a very natural motive, we gave Sir Hew to the *Scots*, but they have thrown him back, with both hands, upon Yorkshire. A Yorkshire-man, has however, came forward, and, in a letter which I here insert, from the Morning Chronicle, has given us what we were so desirous to obtain, some account of the origin and progress of this Convention-making general.——" Sir; " Having mentioned Sir Hew Dalrymple, " though it is certainly a matter altogether " indifferent to the public, whether that " officer be a native of Scotland or of York- " shire; yet as a correspondent, a SCOTCH- " MAN, has thought proper to assert, for- " mally, in contradiction to truth and fact, " that he is *an Englishman*, born in the " county of *York*, I shall state such par- " ticulars as may defy contradiction. His " father was of the county of Ayr, and " rose to the rank of lieut.-col. in the Bri- " tish service. The present Sir Hew is " about 57 years of age, and first entered " the army as an ensign in the Royals, " where he remained many years. His " mother's name was Ross; and she having, " as was before observed, married for her " second husband, General Sir Adolphus " Oughton, he, in some measure, adopted, " befriended, and brought forward in life, " his wife's son. Sir Hew had no patri- " monial inheritance, except a small for- " tune; but *he married a lady who brought* " *him a considerable accession to it.* She " was a daughter of the late General Leigh- " ton, I believe the youngest. These cir- " cumstances may challenge implicit belief. " ——Yours,—A YORKSHIREMAN."—— There have been men, for the honour of whose birth, cities and counties have contended, and others for the honour of their burying-place; but, as far as I know, it was reserved for the list of English generals to possess men, whom countries contended in disowning. The Scots are to be applauded for their motive; but, there is another way, in which for them to shew and to *prove*, that they feel as they ought to do about the Convention, and that is, in *sending up petitions for inquiry*; and, unless they do that, they will, in the end, obtain little credit from their disowning of one of the men, by whom that disgraceful instrument was framed and ratified.——Wellesley is, it seems, gone *to Ireland* to fill his post of Chief Secretary, and it will be worth while just to inquire, whether his salary of *five or six thousand pounds a year* has been going on all the time he has been making armistices in Portugal. He is, if this account be true, now a *minister* again, and a minister, too, having the management of the affairs of a great part of the kingdom. I'll warrant it that the *Irish* do not petition against the Convention! There is a pretty little act of parliament existing with respect to that country, which will have a wonderful effect in keeping the several counties in *a state of perfect tranquillity.* What a pity it is that we have not such an act here! " All in good time," the reader will say; but, how *quiet* we should be!——While all this is going on, without doors, the ministers are said to have their different opinions about the inquiry. This is likely; and I should suppose, that Mr. Canning, who is their prop, would be for the inquiry. I think so for this reason; that he, feeling strong in his own talents, is not, at his early time of life, likely to risk his future prospects by taking a side, which, though it may obtain a momentary triumph, or rather, impunity, will assuredly, first or last, meet with due execration and punishment. Mr. Canning has sense enough to perceive, that things cannot *always* go on thus; he must be pretty sure, that a change, and a very material change, must, in the course of a few years, take place; and, therefore, to say nothing of *justice*, which I still look upon as having some weight with *him*, policy would point out the path I have described. There are others, who are the creatures of mere court intrigue, whose power has no other basis, and who, were they not courtiers, would be nothing; but, it certainly is different with him; and, if the resolution should be to screen and support the Convention makers, I should not be at all surprized to see him, at least, quit the ministry. There is one objection to it indeed, and that is, his connection with the *Grenvilles*; but, he has now tried his own strength, and, if, notwithstanding all that has passed, they should still adhere to the Wellesleys, he cannot fail to foresee, that they, who never were favourites with the nation, will not be a body of which he need stand in dread. These are my opinions. I may deceive myself; but, if justice should be done to the insulted and injured nation, I shall certainly give to him the greater part of the credit.

It was my intention to have made an *exposure* of DON CEVALLOS's *Exposition*, which I look upon as the most prime piece

of impesture that has appeared in print for many years, but I have not time; and, besides, nothing should be mixed with this discussion relative to the Convention. It is what is doing and to be done *here*, here, here at home, that ought to engage our great care and attention. What care I about Ferdinand and Joseph. I am not to have my wits drawn away by this tub to the whale.——Little room as I have, however, I cannot help pointing out to the attention of the reader, a pamphlet, just published, under the following title: "*An Appeal to the Public and a farewell Address to the Army, by* BREVET MAJOR HOGAN, *who resigned his commission, in consequence of the treatment he experienced from the Duke of York, and of the system that prevails in the army,* RESPECTING PROMOTIONS." This, I scruple not to say, is the *most interesting* publication that has appeared in England for many years. It should be read by every individual in the nation. Oh, what a story does this gentleman tell! What a picture does he exhibit! What facts does he unfold! If *this* produce no effect upon the public, why, then, we are so base and rascally a crew, that it is no matter what becomes of us. We are unworthy of the name of men, and are beneath the beasts that perish.

Botley, 20th Oct. 1808.

CONVENTION IN PORTUGAL.

SIR;—When I addressed you on the 19th ult. under the then recent impression which the Conventions in Portugal had made upon me, I noticed every circumstance of them that seemed to call for animadversion. I have since attended to the public discussions on this important subject, and in particular to those very judicious and dispassionate observations which have appeared under your name. I have there seen my own opinions confirmed and strengthened by an able developement of topics on which I had only briefly commented; I have derived additional information from the exposition of several incidental points connected with the main question; and I have, in general, observed, with a satisfaction which is to me the source of much hope and sanguine expectation for the public weal, the periodical and political writers of the United Kingdom (with one solitary and despicable exception) zealously employing their pens and presses, in holding up to universal indignation, the transactions of our commanders in Portugal, in calling for justice upon the guilty, and in thus rescuing the British nation from the "deep damnation" of conniving at what, until some great act of national justice has taken place, must be considered as fixing a most hateful stain upon the national character.—But, Mr. Cobbett, I have looked in vain amongst all the writers on our present subject for any thing amounting to a pretence of justification of the Conventions; still less have I been able to find what could be called a plausible excuse for the persons implicated in the conclusion of them. The exception above alluded to is the Morning Post, the only print that has endeavoured to screen one of the actors in this drama from public indignation by the means (equally discreditable to the principal and his agent) of transferring the blame to an absent and a weaker party. This print has, however, so perpetually shifted its ground of argument; has so often stated facts and revoked them; has had so often recourse to insinuation and misrepresentation where plain and direct language would not suit its purpose; and has now taken such undue advantage of the hacknied device of forging letters from the fleet and army in Portugal;—that it is impossible to say how it would now state the case of its patron if called upon to make a short summary of his apology. We are, moreover, entitled to entertain this doubt from the conduct of the Morning Post since, as well as before, Sir A. Wellesley's return from Portugal. That event has afforded the public no more satisfactory ground than it already possessed for thinking well of the Conventions. In fact, nothing has been said by Sir A. Wellesley or his friends, since his arrival in England, to justify his conduct: they have abandoned their original ground, the famous Protest and Sir Arthur's passive agency; and they have substituted nothing in lieu thereof; so that Sir Arthur stands, at this moment, arraigned for misconduct before the British public, and not a plea, nor any thing that deserves the name of argument, is offered in his defence. It may be said that his great mind disdains to answer what he calls the petty captious bickerings of the vulgar; that he reserves his justification for the grand military inquisition that will hereafter set at the Horse Guards. Be it so; but, if this contempt of public opinion be really the motive of his silence, his friends have strangely mistaken his character in the many awkward attempts that they have made in his favour. It has been said that Sir A arrived in England quite ignorant of the impression made amongst us by his proceedings, and thinking that he had accomplished an amazing feat in getting the French out of Portugal by means of his Conventions. I very much doubt this. I believe, on the

contrary, that he well knew, before he left Portugal, how those acts had been received, not only by the nation at large but also by his majesty's government; and that his coming over, *without being recalled*, was owing to the advice of his friends here, who, in conformity to the old adage that "the "absent are always in the wrong," thought that he would do well to come and make good his own story, leaving his superior officers to the chance of what *their* friends might be able to do for them. It is at the same time but justice to Sir A. to observe, that the circumstance of his plan of defence by recrimination being abandoned, does look as if he were unwilling to sanction so base a proceeding, though he has brought his officious defenders into a scrape very common to injudicious friends,—that of being betrayed into meanness which their very patron is ashamed of and obliged to disavow. At all events, if it should be true that Sir Arthur came away from Portugal in the belief that he had acted meritoriously, and had only to receive on his arrival the plaudits of a grateful country, he could not have been long in England without being undeceived. The very boatmen who landed his baggage, the porter who strapped it on his carriage, must have stared reproof in his face; the looks of every creature he met would apprise him of his fallen estate. When he reached town, he must have learned from his friends the many atrocious calumnies (as they would call them) that had issued against him from the press since the Conventions were known; or even if, through delicacy, his friends should not have told him *all*, the first file of newspapers that he laid his hand upon would shew him how much lee-way he had to make up in the public opinion. Is it then probable, Sir, that under these circumstances any man even of ordinary ambition, and although you do admit him in some sort to despise the vulgar bias of the public mind, should be so far indifferent to his fame, as to neglect any means he might possess of giving a favourable turn to his case? In short, Sir, had Sir A. Wellesley had any thing that could make in his favour, that would be sufficient, I will not say to stop, but even to suspend for a moment, or to slacken the current that now so strongly runs against him, do you think that he would have withheld it? I am convinced that he would not; and I therefore infer, *that he has nothing of this nature to advance.* What, then, you will say, must become of him when, in the hour of public trial, which hour (I differ from you Mr. Cobbett in thinking) must come, he shall be called upon for his public defence and justification?—Having told you what I believe that he has not done, only because he *could* not do it, I will tell you what I as firmly believe will happen upon the occasion to which I look forward.—Whenever a public inquiry into this business takes place, you may depend upon it that we shall be told that the nation has been labouring under a most strange and unaccountable mistake; for that, instead of a calamity, which they seem (poor, silly, ignorant people!) to think has befallen them, they have received a great and signal benefit from the very person on whom they are now calling for judgment. In what that benefit will be made to consist might indeed be difficult to guess, were it not that we have been already told, that the ridding Portugal at any rate of the French army was to be considered as such. This, then, is the great national advantage, that we Englishmen have derived from the immense expence of an armament, such as was never before sent out of British ports, and from the gallantry of our soldiers displayed in two signal defeats of the enemy.—Yes, Sir, this, we shall be told, was the main end and object of the expedition; this has been accomplished, and therefore we ought to be satisfied. To give plausibility to this story, you see that Junot's "*whole army*" is already magnified from 14,000, which were all he could muster at Vimeira, to 25 or even 27,000, which are to be conveyed in our transports from Lisbon to Rochefort; but you very well know too, that if tonnage has really been demanded for this number of men, they will consist of any thing but combatants: probably sick, wounded, civilians, and a very large proportion of renegado Portuguese. Nevertheless shall we be told, that these noted Conventions have driven out of Portugal the whole 25,000 men, just as Lord Castlereagh gravely informed us last year that Lord Cathcart had achieved the conquest of Zealand, when there were 35,000 Danes in arms to oppose him, though every drummer in our army knew, that, excepting the garrisons of Copenhagen and Cronberg, amounting altogether to 6,000 men, there was not, at the time of the capitulation, nor, for many days previous to it, a single man in arms in the whole island; and that there had at no time been one regular battalion without the walls of the above-mentioned towns?—That *this* deliverance of Portugal was not available for the farther operations of the war; that it did not set a man of ours at liberty to assist the Spaniards, but on the contrary deprived our army of the transports in which it might have been conveyed near the scene

of action on the Pyrenees; that it does actually give the French a large and well appointed disposable force which they would not otherwise have possessed;—these considerations are to be regarded as trifling when compared to the main object.—"We have got Portugal, though not all belonging to it: we have got rid of the French there; no matter what becomes of them—charity begins at home—and if these same French should march over the Pyrenees and help to beat the Spanish Patriots, why we are very sorry for it, but our business was to get them out of Portugal: and as to the few little advantages which the French obtained in the course of the negociation and in wording the Conventions, besides that they also are very subordinate considerations, is it our fault that Kellermann was the best negociator of the two? Sir Arthur is a soldier, not a statesman; he has shewn that he could fight and beat the French too; is he to be blamed because he cannot wield the pen as well as the sword, or because Kellermann, who is probably some dull plodding German as his name indicates, and never fought a successful battle in his life, should get and keep the whip hand of him in the course of a long, intricate, and most difficult negociation?"—This, I make no doubt, is the sort of reasoning with which we shall be hereafter edified. But it will not, I dare say, Sir, have escaped your observation, that your correspondent C. has, in your last number, brought forward some "*secret motives, and those very strong ones, to influence the determination of our commanders to agree to a conditional surrender.*" This Mr. C. must surely be one of Sir Arthur's indiscreet injudicious friends, or he never would even have hinted at secret motives in a case, from which, of all others, secrecy seems most necessary to be banished. What, in the name of heaven, could be the secret motives in such a case, unless they consisted in the very convenient, though not very honourable, preference given to the sort of service that was to follow the Conventions, over that which must have been undertaken to force Junot and his army to unconditional surrender? As to C.'s quibbling about your expression of "*next arrival,*" it may, together with his other miserable shifts and subterfuges, be safely left to the corrective energy of your own pen, which has very properly characterized him and the cause in which he is embarked. The whole nation will bear you testimony that it did expect (and not without reason), that the next advices of any importance from the army would announce the surrender of the French at discretion, and that the vessel that brought those advices would also bring two or three of the principal French generals by way of a sample of what ours had been able to achieve.—This, I can at least vouch, was the general sentiment throughout the metropolis, and it should seem that the counties were to the full as sanguine.—But, since we are on the subject of "*secret motives,*" I will suggest for your consideration one which I think more likely than any other to have influenced the determination of our commanders; one which must not only have embarrassed them greatly at the time of framing the Conventions, but which will, if they are good courtiers as I take them to be, embarrass them still more when they come to unfold their motives to the people of England. —Did you never hear, Mr. Cobbett, of such a thing as an INSTRUCTION to a commander drawn up with studied ambiguity, or so encumbered with a multitude of expletives—with paragraph within paragraph—parenthesis within parenthesis—hypothesis built upon hypothesis—and the whole so interlarded with *ifs* and *buts* that it might be construed any and every way save into a direct, clear, and positive meaning? And did you never hear, Sir, that *Lord Castlereagh* was famous for giving such Instructions? There is no act of any description for which a saving clause may not be found in such a dispatch; and there is no clause in it by which any one act can be positively justified: Yet it is such a dispatch under whose influence I am told our commanders acted; and if my information be correct, as I have no doubt it is, their embarrassment, as to what defence they shall set up, will be most naturally accounted for.—But, Sir, let us now look a little farther forward into the consequences of this business; let us see whether it be not possible to extract some eventual good out of the evil that we thus grievously lament. I quite agree with you, that to lose our time in fruitless whining and complaints is to act in a manner very unbecoming men and good citizens. We are, if we do our duty, to see if some practical good may not hereafter result from the confidence of the nation having been thus shamefully abused.—We know from the language of the throne that an inquiry is to take place. Whatever may be the sentence pronounced in a military view, it must be obvious to every body that the source of the evil is not altogether of a military nature, and that it is one which a military court of inquiry is not very likely to notice or to animadvert upon with much

harshness.—What I allude to, Sir, is the practice that has obtained of late years of military and naval commanders negociating and binding their country to stipulations which are altogether beyond the competency of their functions. It is a question in my mind how far the country is, in honour and good faith, obliged to abide by conditions thus subscribed to. I am very much of opinion that the country is under no such obligation; for if you carry the same principle but a little farther, it would be a necessary consequence that if Lord Cathcart, or Gen. Whitelocke, or Sir H. Dalrymple, or any other of your Convention-making generals had, besides giving up the advantages they respectively possessed, chosen to surrender Portsmouth, or Chatham lines, we must equally have been bound to admit an enemy's garrison into them. The Duke of York's stipulating for the surrender of 8,000 French prisoners who were well and securely lodged in our prison-ships and barracks does come as near as possible to such a supposition. But if this be a question open for the discussions of the learned in the law of nations, I imagine that it is not a matter of doubt whether it would be better to restrict our generals *in future* from committing their country by similar engagement.—Some discretionary power is no doubt necessary to the command of an army: but then that power should be as much as possible of a military nature. The extreme of an evil is in some cases its best cure; and it will now be felt that there is a point beyond which a general may not transgress the limits of his command.—To apply this observation to the Conventions, I would ask, what could be so entirely extra-military, so exclusively a political consideration as the acknowledgement contained in the first article of Sir A. Wellesley's armistice, of his imperial and royal majesty Napoleon I.? It is no matter whether the said Napoleon would or would not, at some future day, have been acknowledged by us in that capacity; it could never belong to a general commanding an army on a foreign station to determine the time or mode of so doing.—If I am told that it is an unmeaning complimentary article, and that Buonaparte is not the more an emperor because Sir A. Wellesley chose to call him so, I have only to reply, then why do not you upon the same plea get rid of the Conventions altogether?—Again, what could be more an un-military and political concern than the inquiry into the conduct of the Portuguese during the French occupation of their country? To stipulate moreover that *no* inquiry of this sort should be made, was absolutely to say to our ally the Prince Regent, "You shall be no longer master of your country. We have done you the favour of driving out the French for you, but you have no business to inquire how they came there, or by whom they have been aided or abetted. You shall be nominal sovereign of Portugal, but we will carry on the police for you."—In short, it is as completely dethroning the Prince Regent as if we had sent him word that he should not return to Europe now that he has a comfortable home at the Brazils.—You, Sir, have asked a very pertinent question: "What would the French government have done had its generals made such a Convention as ours have made?" In the first place, Buonaparte, who knows how to choose his men, would hardly have employed a general capable of such a transaction; or if, from favouritism or any family consideration,—for these do sometimes prevail at St. Cloud also,—he did send such a person to command an army, he would have placed a proper check upon him in the second in command, or in the chief of the staff. If, however, after all, such an act had been committed, I have very little doubt that he would have instantly disgraced all the parties concerned in it.——The warning he has given Dupont of what is to be his fate sufficiently indicates what would have been his conduct in the case you have contemplated.—I think then, Sir, that some practical good may arise out of the Conventions; because I think that they will serve as a warning to ministers what Instructions they give generals; and as a warning to generals not to exceed the powers intrusted to them. They must, I think, be productive of a new system in these respects; for even if Lord Castlereagh should, for the misfortune of the country, continue to direct the war department, he must still see that he will, in the end, run too great a risk should he always give obscure unintelligible instructions, and should his generals, for want of a better guide, always blunder over their business in the way we have so often witnessed.—The inquiry that will take place about the Portugal Conventions will set these matters in their proper light, and it will also, I trust, expose to public reprobation that other part of our intercourse with foreign powers, which, under the specious name of conciliation, moderation, &c. would sacrifice the dignity and often the best interests of the country to a mistaken notion of personal feeling and propriety.—I expect to hear upon this subject, that it was perfectly genteel and well-bred to treat Junot and his

army in the manner we have done after having beat them in the field: that it was the bias of a great and generous mind, soaring above little narrow and vulgar national prejudices, to shew that as we were great so we could be merciful; and that it might conciliate the good-will of other countries—of France and of Russia, for instance—to let them see that when victorious we could set bounds to our triumphs, and not carry our resentment to extremes. You may believe me, Sir, it is not with this amiable part of the British character that the nations of the world want to be made acquainted. They give us full credit for disinterestedness, moderation, and generosity; they know that we would never strike or insult a fallen enemy; but they are not so certain of our acting with that vigour that would convince both friends and foes that *we* are not to be insulted with impunity; that we are resolved to obtain satisfaction proportioned to the injuries that we receive; that our exertions will not slacken until the just object of our undertakings be accomplished; and that, at any rate, we are not to be gulled by the artifices of the first intriguer with whom we may happen to have to deal. This is what the people of the continent want to see; they feel that instead of our being Machiavelists, as Buonaparte calls us, all the Machiavelism is on his side, and that we have too often carried on our concerns with other powers with an awkwardness, and a want of system bordering upon silliness.—They think that we make immense efforts to produce very trifling comparative benefits. The nation gives with profusion money and men; the government is at times active in employing them; our soldiers and sailors fight most valiantly; and yet, in the end, what does it all avail us? —We either fail in our object as at the Helder, or obtain it but partially as in the case of Portugal. What can this be owing to but to a defect or to a total want of system? We see things through too small a medium, or we do not look far enough into the consequences of them. Hence it follows, that when we *are* successful, what with surprise and joy, we are so confused that we know not what to do next.—The actions of the 17th and 21st August, do infinite honour to the bravery of our troops, and we certainly were not behind-hand in bestowing a full measure of applause upon their commanders; but it is clear to me that those actions will be noticed in history, more for the inadequate effects which they produced than for any credit that may be due to the persons engaged in them. It really seems as if a British general, going on the command of an expedition, had no other thought in his head than how he should land his army; when that is done he must take time to look about him; and if unmolested by the enemy he sits quietly down upon the shore to consume the provisions brought for him in a fleet of victuallers. It is then fortunate if he does not think it necessary to send home for fresh instructions before he proceeds any farther. At length up comes the enemy.—You observed, no doubt, at the time, that on the 21st August our army was the *attacked* not the *attacking* party; and I have been informed, from very credible authority, that our general knew so little of his opponent's movements, that the troops were three times put under arms and as often dismissed in the night of the 20th; and that it was only at six o'clock in the morning, when Junot's main body was seen within a very short distance of ours, that we discovered what his intentions really were.—If it had not been for Junot's adopting the spirited resolution of marching out of Lisbon to give us battle, he might, according to our mode of proceeding, of which the having three different commanders-in-chief in the course of 36 hours is no immaterial trait, have puzzled them all three so as perhaps to be at this moment in possession of that capital. As it was, we were forced to fight, and our soldiers fought as they always have done. But was it enough to beat the enemy in an encounter which in the seven years' war would have been considered as no more than a sharp affair of advanced guard? Where would Buonaparte now be, if, after the battle of Auerstadt, he had sat himself quietly down before the town, concluded an armistice, and enjoyed for ten days the tickling compliments which one of the king of Prussia's generals might have paid him on the bravery of his troops, or the distinguished conduct of any part of them?—Why, it is probable that the Prussians would have recovered from their panic; collected their scattered corps; and taken up some position in which to arrest the conqueror's march: at all events they would not have been devoured piecemeal, or compelled to surrender at discretion, before they could reach any tenable position. But Buonaparte's business was to take all possible advantage of his victory, and to reach Berlin by the shortest road. Ours was to reach Lisbon. *He* marched his distance in a shorter time than the Prussians. *We* let the French escape and never stirred from our ground. *He* then exemplified the principle which *we* altogether neglect, and the neglect of which is, in my opinion, the cause of much of our distress.—With an exultation, which is only pardonable when it

is successful, he cries: "Nothing is done whilst any thing remains to be done;" and instantly his troops march on to farther conquest and take rest only when their enemy is utterly annihilated. We, on the contrary, always take time to surfeit ourselves with joy and congratulations; the enemy is always active, and after a due portion of expectation and conjecture the public is astonished with the information that our first success not having been followed up, it has been either counterbalanced by some success of the enemy, or tarnished by some want of proper exertion on our own part.—You, Sir, were amongst those who approved of our proceedings last year towards Denmark. It was attempted by men of high political consideration in this country, to maintain that those proceedings alienated from us the affections of the continent. Sir, it was no such thing. The politicians on the continent, many even who did not wish well to this country, were unanimous in exclaiming: "At last the English are roused from their lethargy; at last they assume the tone and attitude that becomes them; we shall now see, at least in the north of Europe, something like a counterpoise to Buonaparte's overbearing ambition." They admired the wisdom of our plan, and would have admired the energy of the execution, if they had not seen us in the month of September drawing in our horns, and hiding ourselves within our shells as if afraid of the cold of October and November. They then thought that we had put ourselves to a great expence, made an amazing uproar in Europe, and subjected our moral character as a nation, at least to some sort of imputation, without obtaining any object adequate to so much risk.—If the Conventions, and the inquiry that is to be instituted concerning them, should lead to a correction of this most capital defect in our system of foreign policy, I shall think that the disgrace, which they have otherwise brought upon us, is not without its countervailing advantage.—I am, yours, &c.—AN ENGLISHMAN.—*Oct.* 18, 1808.

EXPOSITION OF THE PRACTICES AND MACHINATIONS WHICH LED TO THE USURPATION OF THE CROWN OF SPAIN, AND THE MEANS ADOPTED BY THE EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH TO CARRY IT INTO EXECUTION: BY DON PEDRO CEVALLOS, FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE AND DISPATCHES TO HIS CATHOLIC MAJESTY, FERDINAND VII. (Continued from p. 640.)

While these occupied the right bank of the Ebro, and appeared to have for their object the maintaining the communication with Portugal, I entertained the hope that he would not abandon the sentiments of esteem and friendship which he had always manifested towards me. But when I perceived that his troops advanced towards my capital, I felt the urgency there was for collecting my army round my person, to present myself before my august ally in a manner worthy of the king of Spain. I should have removed all his doubts, and have secured my best interests. I gave orders to my troops to leave Portugal and Madrid, and I united them in various parts of my monarchy, not to abandon my subjects, but honourably to support the glory of my throne. Besides, my extensive experience convinced me that the emperor of the French might very well entertain wishes conformable to his particular interest, and to the policy of the vast system of the Continent, but which might be inconsistent with the interests of my house. What was, in such circumstances, your conduct? You introduced disorder into my palace, and infused a spirit of mutiny into my body guard, against my person. Your father was your prisoner; my prime minister, whom I had appointed and adopted into my family, covered with blood, was driven from one danger to another. You dishonoured my grey hairs—you despoiled me of the crown, possessed with glory by my ancestors, which they had preserved without a stain. You seated yourself upon my throne, and placed yourself at the disposal of the people of Madrid, and of foreign troops, who were then entering the capital.—The conspiracy of the Escurial had already accomplished its purposes. The acts of my administration were brought into public contempt. Old, and oppressed by infirmity, I was not able to surmount this new misfortune. I resorted to the emperor of the French, not as a king at the head of my troops, surrounded by the pomp of royalty; but as an unhappy and abandoned prince. I have found refuge and protection in the midst of his camp. I owe to him my own life, that of the queen, and that of the prime minister. I have arrived at last at Bayonne, and you have so conducted this negociation, that every thing depends upon the mediation and protection of this great prince.—The idea of resorting to popular agitation would tend to the ruin of Spain, and expose yourself, my kingdom, my subjects, and my family, to the most horrible catastrophes. My heart has been fully unfolded to the emperor; he knows all the injuries I have received, and the violence that has been done to me; he has declared to me, that you shall never be acknowledged

as king, and that the enemy of his father can never acquire the confidence of foreign states. He has, in addition to this, shewn me letters written with your own hand, which clearly shew your aversion to France, —Things being thus situated, my rights are clear, and my duties are much more so. It is incumbent on me to prevent the shedding of the blood of my subjects, to do nothing at the conclusion of my career, which shall carry fire and sword into every part of Spain, and reduce it to the most horrible misery. Certainly, if faithful to your primary obligations, and to the feelings of nature, you had rejected those perfidious counsels, and placed yourself constantly at my side, for the defence of your father, you had waited the regular course of nature, which would have elevated you in a few years to the rank of royalty. I should have been able to conciliate the policy and interests of Spain, with that of all. For six months, no doubt, matters have been in a critical situation; but notwithstanding such difficulties, I should have obtained the support of my subjects; I should have availed myself of the weak means which yet remained to me, of the moral aid which I should have acquired, meeting always my ally with suitable dignity, to whom I never gave cause of complaint; and an arrangement would have been made which would have accommodated the interests of my subjects to those of my family. But in tearing from my head the crown, you have not preserved it for yourself; you have taken from it all that is august and sacred in the eyes of mankind.—Your behaviour with respect to me, your intercepted letters, have put a brazen barrier between yourself and the throne of Spain, and it is neither your own interest nor that of the country that you should reign in it. Avoid lighting a fire which will unavoidably cause your complete ruin, and the degradation of Spain.—I am king by the right given me by my forefathers: my abdication was the result of force and violence; I have nothing to receive from you; nor can I consent to the convocation of the cortes, an additional absurdity, suggested by the inexperienced persons who attend you.—I have reigned for the happiness of my subjects, and I do not wish to bequeath them civil war, mutiny, popular juntas, and revolution. Every thing should be done for the people, and nothing by the people: to forget this maxim, were to become the accomplice of all the crimes that must follow its neglect. I have sacrificed the whole of my life to my people; and in the advanced age to which I have arrived, I shall do nothing in opposition to their religion, their tranquillity, and their happiness. I have reigned for them; I will constantly occupy myself for their sakes; I will forget all my sacrifices; and when at last I shall be convinced that the religion of Spain, the integrity of her provinces, her independence, and her privileges are preserved, I shall descend to the tomb, forgiving those who have embittered the last years of my life.—Dated from the imperial palace of Bayonne, called the Government Palace, May 2, 1808.

No. IX.—*Letter written by King Ferdinand VII. to his august Father, in answer to the preceding.*

My honoured Father and Lord;—I received the letter that your majesty condescended to write to me, dated yesterday, and I will endeavour to answer all the particulars with that moderation and respect which is due to your majesty.—Your majesty speaks, in the first place, with respect to the alteration in your political conduct towards France, after the peace of Basle; and, in truth, I believe there is no individual in Spain who has complained of it; rather all were unanimous in praising your majesty for your confidence in, and fidelity to the principles you had adopted. Mine, in particular, were entirely similar to your own; and I have given irrefragable proofs of it from the moment when your majesty abdicated the throne in my favour.—Had the affair of the Escurial, which your majesty states, originated in the hatred with which my wife inspired me against France, your ministers, my beloved mother, and your royal self, been examined with all the legal forms, it would have evidently proved the contrary. Notwithstanding I had not the least influence, and no liberty beyond the shew of it,—guarded, as I was, by domestics whom you put round me, yet the eleven counsellors chosen by your majesty were unanimously of opinion, that there was no ground for the accusation, and that the supposed criminals were innocent.—Your majesty talks of the distrust created by the entrance of so many foreign troops into Spain; and that if your majesty recalled from Portugal your troops, and united those that were in Madrid, at Aranjuez, and its neighbourhood, it was not to abandon your subjects, but to support the glory of the throne.

(To be continued.)

Printed by Cox and Baylis, Great Queen Street; published by R. Bagshaw, Brydges Street, Covent-Garden, where former Numbers may be had: sold also by J. Budd, Crown and Mitre, Pall-Mall.